THE CULTURAL GAP IN THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF BIBHUTIBHUSHAN BANDOPADHYAY'S SELECT NOVELS: A CRITICAL FINDING

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CHIRANJIT MUKHERJEE

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA UNIVERSITY

BARRACKPORE

KOLKATA-700121

WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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Abstract

Language and culture are two inseparable phenomena that underline any act of translation. To transfer a message from the source text into the target text, the translator must somehow overcome linguistic and cultural barriers. Cultural aspects of translation are related to the beliefs, customs, history, literature, and shared knowledge of the speech community in which the original text has been created. Accordingly, throughout the history, translation has played an important role in conveying thoughts and knowledge from one nation to other nations. Apart from this importance, the act of translating is not simply changing a message from the source language into the target one; translation is an act of problem solving.

This study attempts to arrange the role of English translation on perpetual literary pieces of Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay in general and in the Indian culture in particular. It aims to uplift the immense potentiality of vernacular literature in Bengali language to the world. A little work has been done in this field. The cultural gap between the source culture and the target culture is evident in the translations of Bibhutibhushan's novels and a theory or relooking should be formed to minimize those gaps. Qualitative and analytical research methodology has been applied in this research. The research methodology has also included close reading, interpreting, comparing, contrasting the primary sources *Pather Panchali (Song of the Road)* translated by T.W. Clark and T. Mukherjee; *Aparajito (The Unvanquished)* translated by Gopa Majumdar; *Aranyak* (Of *the Forest*) translated by Rimli Bhattacharya. Biographical and historical material including books on contemporary cultural studies, translation studies, translator's note too will be made use of in order to establish the social and cultural milieu in which the writers live and write.

To study the process of translation, theoreticians find some factors through which they can make some equivalence between the original work and its translation. Generally, all translators try to cope with finding equivalence in order to elicit the translation units better. Some scholars try to make borderline between the equivalence related to form and the equivalence related to meaning. Thus, different translators give emphasis on different aspects of equivalence. In this study the perspective of importance of translation of Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay's writing in our age will also be a main focus along with its cultural rendition.

In India there is enormous number of translations from different languages, but theoretical analysis and study are not so great in number. Rabindranath Tagore got Nobel Prize translating his own '*Gitanjali*' to *'Song Offerings'* but did not write any treatise on the theoretical aspects of translation. What Rabindranath intended was to recapture the creative mood and re-writing it in English as an aesthetic experience. Rabindranath considered translation as' re-incarnations', the migration of 'soul'. To whom it is 'not an act of craft; it is an act of creation.'

The study is an attempt for the simplest explanation-in a way of seeing how meaning emerges in any cultural practice, in that case in translation of classic novels. It examines the genre, the medium, the language, the culture, the significance of the English translation of Bibhutibhushan's novels-*Pather Panchali, Aparajito* and *Aranyak*. The aim of this study is to make a circumstantial analysis and a deep quest into the multidimensional aspects of Bengali culture in the limelight of the translated texts of Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay including the retrospection and interpretation of the respective translators of the texts included. In order to facilitate this process, it is an attempt to delve into the Bengali culture and study, its various aspects as reflected in the English translation of *Pather Panchali (Song of the Road)*

translated by T.W. Clark and Tarapada Mukherji; *Aparajito (The Unvanquished)* translated by Gopa Majumdar; *Aranyak* (*Of the Forest*) translated by Rimli Bhattacharya.

The world of Bibhutibhushan is invariably green and perpetual as nature is the heart of almost all his prose narratives. His very first novel *Pather Panchali (Song of the Road)* and its sequel *Aparajito (The Unvanquished)* deal with human-nature affinity in the deepest level and the root deeps into the cultural milieu of contemporary Bengal. The present article seeks to examine these conspicuous novels in Bengali later translated into English from the various facets of cultural perspectives. The rural landscape, human nature bond, pathetic fallacy, the mal-treatment of the weaker section of the society, the impact of culture -all these are some of the cardinal postulates of cultural and translation studies.

The thesis has the following chapters:

1. Introduction

2. Bengali Cultures, Traditions as Reflected in the English Translation of Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay's *Pather Panchali, Aparajito and Aranyak.*

3. Bengali Dialect and Their Presentation in the English Translation of Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay's Select Novels: A Quest and Finding from Translators' Note.

4. English Translation of Bibhutibhushan's Works as a Boon to the Materialistic and Conflict-Ridden Modern World.

5. Conclusion.

Chapter 1 records various aspects of Translation Theories and their relation to the English Translation of Bengali Novels, especially the novels of Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay. The role of Renaissance and freedom movement in spreading translation in India has also been studied in this chapter. The process of translation and various factors behind it has also been studied. To study the process of translation, theoreticians find some

factors through which they can make some equivalence between the original work and its translation.

Chapter 2 deals with the three translated novels of Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay separately but coherently with an introduction to cultural studies. Culture is not only a collection of our conscious values but it is also reflection of our assumptions about socio moral values. Right from our infancy, we evolve as individuals through our interactions with other people. Without social simulation and communication with others a child does not become a normal social creature because he cannot adequately develop language, emotional expressions, social responsiveness or personality of his own. Cultural untranslatability refers to the translation difficulties that originate from the gap between the source culture and the target culture

Indian culture is opulent and distinctive and this 'unity in diversity' is exceptionally phenomenal in its very own way. Our manners, way of communication, style of living, social conduct, fashion are some of the significant constituents of our culture. It goes without saying that familiarity with the classical works written in these languages will help us to savour the inexhaustible variety of India's cultural heritage and also imbibe the ethos reflected therein.

Bibhutibhushan's works are largely set in rural Bengal representing a rich cultural heritage. Several of his novels are set in Bongaon subdivision in modern day 24 Parganas. Hindu Bengali culture in the backdrop of Icchamati river is the source culture here. To describe that culture Bibhutibhushan has used a simple lucid story telling.

Pather Panchali chronicles the glories of everyday life that its characters can access from bird song at dawn to a full plate of rice at lunch. This Cadence of the everyday pervades all Bibhutibhushan's works, and preserving it in translation has been a complex exercise for multiple reasons. For one, *Pather Panchali* is rich in rural terms of speech, detailed

expositions of the natural environment and passing references to festivals and rituals that once populated the agrarian calendar of southern riverine Bengal.

Chapter 3 examines the lexical gap in the English Translation of Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay' select novels. Restricted to a geographical socio-cultural boundary, it is the life and soul of the culture and tradition of a society very typical to its heritage. In terms of within regional language translation, the richness of India's lingual traditions within different Indian dialect is evidently portrayed magnanimously. Regional dialect helps preserve local language and way of life in a globalised world, The impediments that TW Clark and Tarapada Mukherjee encountered in the process of translating *Pather Panchali* have manifold directions. From linguistic and dialectical aspect, it was a competent challenge to them

Chapter 4 delineates with the characters of *Pather Panchali* and *Aranyak*- Apu, Durga, Sarbojoya, Satyacharan, and the Adivasis of the Labtulia estate -are, in different ways, victims of environmental injustice and class struggle in order to establish the utility and universal appeal of Bibhutibhushan's writing. Each character is diligently connected with his or her surroundings. Sometimes this relationship is established through passionate memories of childhood as in the case of Apu. At other times, it is shown through the effects of change in location, as in the case of Satyacharan. But in both novels, the environment plays a pivotal role in the lives of the characters. Through his writings that place nature at the centre, Bibhutibhushan expresses his concern about the sufferings of peripheral people and their poverty, and developmental displacement. What Bibhutibhushan evokes is the message to the world that even in the face of adversity man should not lose faith in mankind. Through knowledge, love and sympathy only we can conquer the world. Adversity may come in one's life but one should face them with modesty. In the very simple day to day life lies joy which may not be found in abundance of wealth. The receptor and his mindset are important to realize this fundamental truth of life.

In conclusion the study has also found that, in general, the purpose of translation is to reproduce various kinds of texts in another language and thus making them available to wider readers. In that context the interpretation of the translated text of Bibhutibhushan can also serve as a panacea to the materialistic and conflict-ridden lifestyle of the modern age. The difference between a source language and a translated language and the variation in their cultures makes the process of translating a real challenge. Words can be translated but emotions can't be.

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Supervisor Research Scholar